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6. UNUSUAL NEST SITE OF A THREE STRIPED PALM SQUIRREL, *FUNAMBULUS PALMARUM* AT POINT CALIMERE

On 28th November 1986, around 1410 hrs. we saw a three striped Palm squirrel carrying a young one in its mouth, under a Palmyra tree near our office campus. It was followed by another squirrel. The young one was held by its back and was slowly carried towards the Palmyra tree followed by the second adult. The squirrel climbed the tree with the other following when it reached the edge of the crown it waited there, within a minute the second squirrel climbed over the crown and started looking beneath. The young one was

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released and made to climb over the crown and to a leaf-stalk followed by the parent and both of them disappeared into the leaf fold. After this event the adult which was waiting below the crown rushed down to the ground and disappeared. After a few minutes, with the help of a local man who climbed the Palmyra tree, we confirmed the presence of the young one with one of its parents in the nest which was located on the leaf fold. This nest site is unusual and unrecorded before.

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7. A NOTE ON THE POST-PARTUM REPRODUCTION IN THE SHORT-TAILED BANDICOOT RAT (*NESOKIA INDICA*)

The occurrence of pregnancy during lactation and a lactation-controlled delay in blastocyst implantation in the rat and mouse have frequently been documented (Lamming 1978). In this, the female experiences a period of heat and even ovulates a few days after the parturition. If there is a successful mating during this period, the pregnancy may occur

even when it is lactating. We have observed a few similar cases in the colony of the short-tailed bandicoot rat, *Nesokia indica*.

The rats were collected from the fields and were maintained in our animal house for experimental purposes. They breed successfully in captivity under natural photoperiod and temperature conditions and show breeding

activity during winter and spring months (Gariyali 1975). It was observed while breeding these rats that the female, kept with a male, delivered litters twice successively. Within the period of a single breeding season during 1984-85, three such cases of pregnancy were observed.

In first case, a single female rat was caged with one male for mating purpose. On December 10, 1984, this female delivered 4 young ones. On January 12, 1985, the same female again gave birth to 2 young ones. The time between the successive litters was 33 days. In second case, one female rat, kept with a male, littered 3 young ones on January 16, 1985. After a gap of 34 days, i.e. on February 19, 1985, this female gave birth to another litter of 2 young ones. And in third case, one female, kept with a male, delivered 4 young ones on March 19, 1985. On April 17, 1985, the same female littered another batch of 4 young ones. Twenty nine days intervened between these successive litters. In all these cases, the male

was removed about 4-5 days after the first littering.

The observed second time pregnancy and then littering in the fore-mentioned cases may well possibly be due to a fertile post-partum mating within short time after the first parturition, as stated earlier. In first two cases, the time interval between the birth of the two litters are 33 and 34 days respectively which are more than the normal gestation period (av. 28.5 days) for the bandicoot rats. It is possible that the post-partum mating combined with delayed implantation of the blastocysts may account for these two cases. The incidence and duration of delayed implantation of blastocysts are known to be affected by the length and intensity of lactation (Lamming 1978). In third case, since the time interval between two litters is 29 days which is the normal gestation period of this animal, it is obvious that soon after the first littering a fertile post-partum mating and normal implantation of the blastocysts had occurred.

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8. ALBINISM IN THE BLUE BULL OR NILGAI, *BOSELAPHUS TRAGOCAMELUS* (PALLAS, 1766)

Albinism as a phenomenon of the lack of pigmentation resulting from the inability to synthesise melanin and caused by the absence of dominating allele is frequently observed among mammals of India, especially in such

species as Chital or Axis deer — *Cervus axis* Erxleben, 1777, Blackbuck — *Antelope cervicapra* (Linnaeus, 1758), and Chinkara — *Gazella gazella bennetti* (Sykes, 1831). In specimens of these species bred in zoos of India —